



# MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DECISION NOTICE

on

### **Bailey Reservoir, Doucette Reservoir and PR 054 Reservoir Bluegill Stocking**

Region 6  
1 Airport RD  
Glasgow MT 59230  
May 1, 2019

#### Proposed Action

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks (FWP) proposes to stock bluegill in Bailey, Doucette and PR 054 Reservoirs. The reservoirs are located on public lands and have not been stocked previously with bluegill.

#### Montana Environmental Policy Act

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess potential impacts of its proposed actions to the human and physical environments. In compliance with FWP's MEPA Public Involvement Policy, three separate Environmental Assessments were prepared by FWP for the proposed projects and released on April 18, 2019 for public comment. The draft EA's were titled: *Bailey Reservoir – Environmental Review of Fish Introduction*, *Doucette Reservoir – Environmental Review of Fish Introduction* and *PR 054 Reservoir – Environmental Review of Fish Introduction*. The draft EA's were circulated to local newspapers and radio and were also posted and remain available for viewing on the FWP webpage at <http://fwp.mt.gov/home/publicComments.html>. The draft EA's evaluated the potential impacts of the following alternatives in addition to the proposed action:

#### Alternative A: No Action

If the No Action alternative were adopted, bluegill would not be stocked and thus, no additional recreational angling opportunity would be provided.

#### Summary of Public Comment and FWP Response

Given the similar nature of the three separate EA's and the limited public comment received, a single decision notice and summary is deemed appropriate.

Five comments were received during the public comment period, which ended on April 30, 2019. Four comments were made via email and one comment was received via phone. All comments were generally supportive of the proposed action. No new information, concerns, or objections arose from the comments that were not evaluated or within the scope of the draft EA's. Comment summaries and the Department's response are as follows:

#### Comment Summary 1

All commenters expressed support for stocking the proposed reservoirs and appreciated the additional angling opportunity.

*Response:* Thank you for your comments.

#### Comment Summary 2

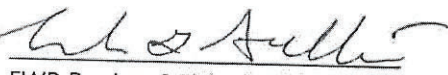
One commenter expressed concern regarding potential overpopulation as it relates to bluegill spawning success.

*Response:* The waterbodies have established predator populations that will utilize the bluegill as primary and/or secondary forage option. Bailey Reservoir contains both northern pike and walleye, whereas largemouth bass are established in Doucette and PR 054 Reservoirs. A combination of natural predation and angling mortality should be sufficient to restrict the potential overpopulating of bluegill populations at all three reservoirs.

#### Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and FWP evaluation, it is my decision to proceed with the proposed stocking of bluegill in Bailey, Doucette and PR 054 Reservoirs.

I find there to be no significant impacts to the human and physical environments associated with this project. Public comments received during the comment period showed general support for the proposed action. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

 5-1-19  
FWP Region 6 Fisheries Manager  
Superior